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ABSTRACT

The research reported in this paper is a case study of one student's learning in a writers' workshop where two teacher-researchers were developing new curriculum and instructional practices. The case study was developed out of a larger qualitative study in which 47 fifth-grade students' growth as writers was studied over a 1-year period as they participated in a writers' workshop. The purpose of the study was to examine students' knowledge, skills, ways of knowing, and ways of being in a learning community. This case study provides a detailed portrait of "Billy's" growth as a writer across a 1-year period, explaining ways in which reading, writing, speaking, and listening were intricately connected as a means of helping him become a writer who took risks and developed ownership of his writing. In addition to documenting his writing knowledge and skills, the paper describes Billy's transformations in values, attitudes, and interests related to writing. The paper discusses issues that are pertinent to understanding all students' learning and writing growth over time, as well as the surface tensions that arise out of using a workshop format to support all students' writing development. The paper also considers ways in which the teacher-researchers' own changes in curriculum and teaching practices may have influenced Billy's growth. A table presenting the unit overview and curriculum strands, a table presenting dimensions of Billy's change over time, and a table summarizing Billy's writing folder are included; 17 references are attached. (Author/RS)

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Elementary Subjects Center
Series No. 58

LITERACY CURRICULUM-IN-THE-MAKING: A CASE STUDY OF BILLY'S LEARNING

Cheryl L. Rosaen and
Barbara Lindquist

Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

Institute for Research on Teaching
College of Education
Michigan State University

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Abstract

The research reported in this paper is a case of one student's learning in a writers' workshop where two teacher-researchers were developing new curriculum and instructional practices. The case was developed out of a larger qualitative study in which 47 fifth-grade students' growth as writers was studied over a one-year period as they participated in a writers' workshop. The purpose of the study was to examine the following questions: (a) *Knowledge, skills, and ways of knowing*: How did the students participate in literacy activities and the writing process? What qualitative changes are evident in written products over the year? What knowledge, skills, and dispositions were developed? (b) *Ways of being in a learning community*: How did students interpret and participate in the social context in which the literacy activities took place? How did their interpretation and participation shape their writing knowledge and skills and their disposition to write?

This case provides a detailed portrait of Billy's growth as a writer across a one-year period, explaining ways in which reading, writing, speaking, and listening were intricately connected as a means of helping him become a writer who took risks and developed ownership of his writing. In addition to documenting his writing knowledge and skills, it describes Billy's transformations in values, attitudes, and interests related to writing. The authors discuss ways in which this case raises issues that are pertinent to understanding all students' learning and writing growth over time, and surface tensions that arise out of using a workshop format to support all students' writing development. Ways in which the teacher-researchers' own changes in curriculum and teaching practices may have influenced Billy's growth are also considered.

LITERACY CURRICULUM-IN-THE-MAKING: A CASE STUDY OF BILLY'S LEARNING[1]

Cheryl Rosaen and Barbara Lindquist[2]

Background and Overview

The goal of helping students participate as readers and writers in a literate community has become commonplace in elementary classrooms across the country. The writing literature (e.g., Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1983, 1986, 1990; Graves, 1983) recommends using a particular instructional model, the writers' workshop, which is designed to support specific aspects of the writing process over time. For example, the teacher's responsibility is to create a structure and social context within which students can write on a regular basis, share their writing with others for the purposes of celebrating finished pieces, or to get feedback and assistance in making revisions. Teacher support comes in the form of helping students learn about ways to manage the writing process and to improve the texts they create. It is further advised that students will develop ownership for their writing only if they can experience what Moffett (1979) calls the full range of authorship decisions and are able to choose their own writing topics, purposes, forms, audience, and time frames for generating and publishing pieces. In a workshop environment, writers learn about, practice, and perfect the craft of writing by exercising a great deal of control

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 1992.

[2] Cheryl L. Rosaen, assistant professor of teacher education at Michigan State University, is a senior researcher with the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. Barbara Lindquist is a fifth-grade teacher at Elliott-MSU Professional Development School. The authors work closely with a group of teacher-researchers in the Literacy in Science and Social Studies Project to improve and study their practice. They would like to acknowledge joint contributions of all project participants in data collection and analysis and in developing the ideas regarding learning community and teaching for understanding that are discussed in this paper. Additional project participants are Kathleen Roth (senior researcher); Constanza Hazelwood, Kathleen Peasley, and Corinna Hasbach (research assistants); and Carol Ligett (third-grade teacher) and Elaine Hoekwater (fifth-grade teacher). Hazelwood and Peasley assisted with field notes, audio taping, and interviewing. Lindquist and Rosaen were responsible for teaching writing to two classes of fifth graders while other project members taught science and social studies in different collaborative arrangements.

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over a range of writing decisions. Ways in which reading, sharing, and study of literature can be integrated into the writers' workshop to support students in learning to become better writers are also offered as important aspects of creating a literate environment.

Classroom activities make up the direct experiences students have in school, and as they take place over time, make up the experiences through which learning communities are created. Activities are the intellectual and actual work that students and teachers do together in classrooms--reading, talking, writing, listening, watching, observing, and so forth (Doyle, 1983). Embodied in them are three curriculum strands that make up potential (intended) and actual (enacted and actual) learning for students: (a) knowledge and skills: subject matter concepts, big ideas, how they are connected, how they can be used to explain real-world situations and solve real-world problems; (b) ways of knowing: what it means to "know" subject matter (e.g., socially constructing knowledge, activities in which writers engage, ways of improving one's writing craft, how knowledge about literature can be useful to writers); and (c) ways of being in a learning community: what it means to be a learner who writes in a social context, the underlying and enacted social norms associated with a successful learning community (e.g., ownership and commitment to learning, collaboration, valuing of diverse members' contributions, listening to others' ideas, publicly sharing and revising ideas, and celebrating the learning process and the new knowledge that is constructed).

Students make sense of particular activities at particular points in time and also construct meaning as they experience a range of activities over time. Their individual experiences add up or accumulate into larger curricular messages over time (Bernstein, 1975; Erickson, 1982; Rosaen, 1989). It is important to look at the meaning students construct through experiencing particular activities in the broader context of the unit, a series of units, a year of study. For example, a student's

knowledge, ways of knowing, and ways of being in a learning community in September will shape the meaning constructed in different ways than the characteristics the same student might bring in March to the same activity.

As classroom teachers change their instructional practices to match the advice found in the literature, it is important to ask several questions to find out more about how students interpret literacy activities and how participating in a literate environment influences their images of themselves as writers and the actual writing they do. For example, what do authentic literacy activities look like? What kinds of knowledge, skills, and dispositions do students need to become fully participating members of a literate community? How can teachers support students' initiation into and participation in such a community? What are important social norms associated with a literate community and how can teachers support students in understanding and operating within such norms?

The research reported in this paper is a case of one student's learning in the context of a writers' workshop where two teacher-researchers were developing new curriculum and instructional practices. It provides a detailed portrait of Billy's[3] growth as a writer across a one-year period, explaining ways in which reading, writing, speaking, and listening were intricately connected as a means of helping him become a writer who took risks and developed ownership of his writing. This case illustrates ways in which one learner not only developed particular knowledge and skills associated with becoming a writer but also experienced transformations (Jackson, 1986) in values, attitudes, and interests related to writing. While Billy's story is about one learner's unique transformations in a writing community, it suggests several issues that are pertinent to understanding all students' learning and provides rich insights into what it means to understand writing growth. Moreover, it

[3]All student names are pseudonyms. Actual names of teachers are used.

raises issues and surfaces tensions that arise out of using a workshop format to support all students' writing development over time.

Research Questions

This case was developed out of our larger qualitative study in which 47 fifth-grade students' growth as writers was studied over a one-year period as they participated in a writers' workshop. The purpose of the study was to examine the following questions: (a) *Knowledge, skills, and ways of knowing:* How did the students participate in literacy activities and the writing process? What qualitative changes are evident in written products over the year? What knowledge, skills, and dispositions were developed? (b) *Ways of being in a learning community:* How did students interpret and participate in the social context in which the literacy activities took place? How did their interpretation and participation shape their writing knowledge and skills and their disposition to write?

The LISSS Project: Defining, Creating, and Researching a Literate Environment

We have been working with a group of educators (university researchers and teacher educators, graduate assistants, teachers) in a professional development school since Fall 1989 in a project called Literacy in Science and Social Studies (LISSS). The focus of our work has been to explore ways to genuinely engage students in their education and to create classrooms that are learning settings for *all* students. During the first year of the project (1989-90), our group focused on a collaborative study of what visions of teaching and learning in science, social studies, and writing seem most promising. The group also examined the role writing and discourse (questioning, listening, sharing ideas, and talking) play in such visions. In particular, we considered ways in which a writers' workshop might be an appropriate approach to teaching writing not only to support students in becoming better writers but also to learn to use writing, written text, and discourse as a

learning tool, not just as an end in itself. Literacy includes reasoning, problem solving, and critical and creative thinking as a way to generate new knowledge and new skills (Brown, 1991; Michaels & O'Connor, 1990).

During the second year (1990-91), we focused on understanding and using "research for teaching" (Noddings, 1986) by project participants taking on a teacher-researcher role. In the context of teaching writing, Rosaen (a teacher educator and researcher) and Lindquist (a fifth-grade teacher) coplanned and cotaught a writers' workshop across one school year while engaging in qualitative research on our own teaching and the students' learning. We saw this as an opportunity for us to collaborate in transforming our own curriculum and teaching practices to see what kinds of literacy learning can be fostered in a writers' workshop. We studied our teaching and 47 fifth-grade students' developing knowledge, skills, and disposition to write and the nature of their participation in the writing process over time.

Methodology

The Students

One fifth-grade class included 22 students and the other 25. The 47 fifth graders were predominantly Caucasian and included one African-American student, three Hispanic students, and two students of Native-American descent. The community is both rural and blue collar and located adjacent to a midsize city and a large university. Some newly built neighborhoods have attracted more professional and paraprofessional families. Of the five elementary schools in the district, this school is considered to have the highest number of "at-risk" students. Many students live in a neighboring trailer park and are living on low family incomes.

Target Students

Seventeen target students were chosen near the end of the year for more intensive study (six females and three males from one class; three females and five males from the other). The students in the target student group represent a range of

abilities (including students receiving speech therapy and Chapter I reading assistance, as well as students of higher academic ability). Sixteen students are Caucasian and one is Hispanic. Billy, a Caucasian student whose case is reported in this paper, was part of the target group.

Data Sources

Classroom lessons, group work, and writing conferences conducted with the 47 fifth graders were documented with field notes, audiotapes, and videotapes across the year. All whole-class lessons were audiotaped from September through February. Whole-group lessons were both audiotaped and videotaped March through May. During individual work time, one audio recorder was placed at different four-desk clusters to capture verbal interaction. Rosaen carried an audio recorder with her whenever she worked individually with students. Large-group and small-group sharing sessions were either audiotaped or videotaped. All 47 students' written work (e.g., journals, writing projects, and written reflections on their own writing progress) was collected.

The 17 target students were interviewed formally at the end of the school year. Twelve students were interviewed individually (and videotaped). Two small-group interviews (five students from one class and five from the other) were also videotaped. Billy was not interviewed individually but was included in the group interview. Students were also interviewed informally as part of ongoing instruction throughout the year to learn more about how they made sense of the literacy learning experiences, their own perceptions of the writing process, and how they perceived these experiences to be related (or not related) to learning experiences in science and social studies. These informal interviews were audiotaped. Rosaen and Lindquist audiotaped their planning sessions across the year and saved all written documents associated with planning (e.g., planning notes, schedules, calendars, and resource lists).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was aimed at understanding three main aspects of teaching and learning: (a) the intended curriculum throughout the year; (b) the enacted curriculum, including the subject matter content and the development of the social context for learning over time; and (c) individual meaning constructed by students within writers' workshop.

Using planning records, audiotapes, and field notes, we constructed a chronological summary of our intended curriculum across the year, divided the year into seven instructional units, and summarized daily lessons within each unit (see Table 1). This curriculum overview was used as a tool in tracing students' development over time, as a way to compare the intended and experienced curriculum, and as a way to locate in real time what was occurring in the learning community when insights about a particular learner's growth were investigated. Using field notes, Constanza Hazelwood constructed detailed notes regarding the development of the learning community across the year, paying attention to the nature of language used by teachers and students, the overall atmosphere in the classroom, and the nature and level of participation.

Using field notes, audiotapes, videotapes, and student interview transcripts, dimensions of learning community participation for each target student were developed and coded. These dimensions include ownership of and commitment to writing tasks, using a variety of resources in writing projects, asking questions to clarify thinking, participating in a variety of activities to stimulate thinking, and engaging in purposeful editing, engaging in writing as an ongoing process, and increasing control over multiple aspects of the writing process.

To learn about students' growth in writing knowledge, skills, and dispositions to write, their written work, audiotapes of writing conferences, and interviews were analyzed using the following categories: themes explored in writing, writing style

and voice, forms of writing experimented with and used, use of language structures, mechanics, and awareness of and attention to audience.

Teachers in Transition: Developing a Writers' Workshop

In this section, we give a brief overview of our year-long curriculum. This is not only important for locating and understanding Billy's learning in real time but for understanding how changes and developments in the learning community resulting from our ongoing collaboration and learning may have influenced developments in Billy's learning.

Parallels in Teachers' and Students' Development

As we discussed ways for our students to learn to work with each other, we simultaneously worked on ways to work as colleagues in our planning, teaching, and research. We had jointly studied the literature on creating a writers' workshop and each had prior teaching experiences in which each had tried to implement aspects of this approach to teaching writing, but our teaching experiences occurred at different grade levels and we had never taught together. As we look back at our year-long curriculum, it is apparent that there is a developmental history to our collaboration implicit in it. As shown in Table 1 and in the discussion that follows, we chunked our units into three phases: Laying Groundwork (Units 1-3), Initiation (Units 4-5), and Delving More Deeply Into Authorship (Units 6-7). This summary reflects our intentions for the units (intended curriculum) as well as the time actually devoted to particular goals within units (enacted curriculum). Billy's case is an example of the experienced curriculum.

Laying Groundwork

We both knew from our years of teaching experience that the first few months of any school year can be critical in setting the tone in the classroom, establishing routines and norms, and providing a foundation for working relationships. We clustered the first three units we taught into this phase because they served those

Table 1

Unit Overview and Curriculum Strands

PHASE 1: LAYING GROUNDWORK	Strand 1: The Learning Community	Strand 2: The Writing Process	Strand 3: Literary Understanding and Appreciation
Unit 1: All About Me Sept. 4-24	Background: relationship building: trust, respect; modeling how students could help each other with writing and how to collaborate; learning is celebrated	**Foreground:** overview of the writing process (one complete cycle) revising techniques: leads, word choice, use of details, focus; parents night as occasion to publish	
Unit 2: Animalia Sept. 25-Oct. 8	**Foreground:** collaboration through cooperative groups; public sharing and revision of ideas; ownership, commitment, shared responsibility, learning is celebrated	Background: writing process embedded in way the task was structured: brainstorm ideas, use of details, sense-making	Background: Identify why *Animalia* is appealing and interesting; use of quality literature as model
Unit 3: Descriptive Writing Oct. 9-Nov. 11	Background: use of evidence and developing shared expertise about what makes good description; public sharing and revision of ideas; learning is celebrated; ownership, commitment, shared responsibility	**Foreground:** practicing the writer's craft: revision techniques to create better description through use of 5 senses and exaggeration; revise before you write	Background: use of literature as models; revision of published literature

Table 1 (contd)

PHASE 2: INITIATION	Strand 1: The Learning Community	Strand 2: The Writing Process	Strand 3: Literary Understanding and Appreciation
Unit 4: Establishing a Writer's Workshop Nov. 8-Dec. 19	**Foreground:** how to work together as a community of writers; use patterns established to support and develop capacity to help each other (see Strand 2); personally meaningful learning as a goal	**Foreground:** responding to each other's writing: receiving a piece, author's day, getting topic ideas; visit from author; Christmas walk-through	Background: literature share day as routine; share literature on winter topics as source of ideas and models
Unit 5: Poetry in Writer's Workshop Jan. 7-Feb. 7	Background: use author's day and literature share day as pattern to encourage celebration and sharing; "I wish" group poem; personally meaningful learning as a goal	Background: use writing process to create poetry or other forms of writing; students have choice of topic and form	**Foreground:** learn about aspects of poetry: simile, personification, line breaks, color poems, "I wish" poems, poetic license use published pieces as models

Table 1 (contd)

PHASE 3: DELVING MORE DEEPLY INTO AUTHORSHIP	Strand 1: The Learning Community	Strand 2: The Writing Process	Strand 3: Literary Understanding and Appreciation
Unit 6: Authors' Design Feb. 13-March 21	Background: inquiry, asking questions, public sharing of ideas, use of evidence and shared expertise, valuing and respecting others' ideas, personally meaningful learning as a goal	Background: use authors' design as a framework for own writing	**Foreground:** understanding relationship among aspects of authors' design: author's topic and purpose, topic knowledge, choice of form, audience, audience response
Transition Period March 25-April 18	Background: continue writer's workshop as schedule permits (testing, vacation interruptions) sharing of student writing and published literature	**Foreground:** select piece to put in middle school folder and write a paragraph about self	Background: create "wish list" of books to order for library (also served as information on student interests for next unit)
Unit 7: Authors' Exploration April 22-May 16	Background: collaborate with others to explore different book sets and develop focus question	Background: study authors' biographies and book sets to get ideas for topics and forms; study own "All About Me" piece from viewpoint of memoir; develop focus question for finding out more about fiction, biography, or subject matter	**Foreground:** use biographical materials and book sets to explore: Where do authors get ideas? What do authors do to improve their writing? Explore book sets: fiction, biography, subject matter sets

functions as well as laid the groundwork for further subject matter learning. During these units, students could--with support--participate in the entire writing cycle (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) and interactions associated with different aspects of the cycle. They could be supported in learning to collaborate and get to know each other as people, writers, and learners better. They could also be introduced to descriptive writing and revising techniques and practice the craft of writing. Growth of this kind would require not only developing appropriate subject matter knowledge but also require transformations in attitudes, values, and commitments (Jackson, 1986) associated with good writing. At the same time, we as coteachers became better acquainted with our own strengths, ways of organizing our planning and teaching, ways of working individually with students, and ways of conceptualizing what it means to teach students to write.

Initiation

We clustered our fourth and fifth units into an initiation period because it was during these units that we opened up the classroom and provided ways for students to use the groundwork laid and "be writers" in ways that were not available before. Instead of assigning writing projects, we set into motion new routines that enabled students to make their own choices about the topics, forms, deadlines, and level of collaboration for their writing. Routines (e.g., journal writing, authors' day, and literature-sharing day) were implemented to encourage students to collaborate on an ongoing basis as *they* felt the need or desire. Our teaching activities shifted from directing the structure of our entire writing time (e.g., deciding when students would discuss, write, etc.) to providing brief mini-lessons on poetry to introduce ideas for writing topics and forms. Our intention was that students could *choose* to take advantage of these ideas (or not). Writing conferences shifted focus from our making the rounds to make sure everyone was keeping up with the assigned task (and also discussing the content of drafts as needed) to helping students realize their

own intentions as writers. These changes took place partly because we sensed the students were ready for them and partly because we were ready to be initiated into more radical changes in our own teaching roles and practices. In addition to our usual planning time, we spent a great deal of time discussing what was happening during writing time and whether our actions on a particular day were supporting the kinds of learning we hoped to foster--continued development of particular knowledge and skills as well as changes in attitudes, values, and interests.

Delving More Deeply Into Authorship

Our final phase of the year focused on deepening and enriching our students' and our own understandings of what it means to be an author--what authors do, think about, and value as part of their work. While participants in our community of writers continued to pursue their own writing projects and goals, we aimed, in our authors' design unit, to provide occasions for mutual study of how authors might approach constructing a piece and what they take into consideration (e.g., relationships among the topic, purpose or message, audience, and form). During the authors' exploration unit, we studied ways in which different types of literature (e.g., mystery, fantasy, subject matter trade books, and biography) can provide ideas and models for good writing and where authors get ideas for writing topics and forms. This unit was also developed out of our perceived need to be more responsive to our students' interests and their growing independence as writers. It was at this phase that we as coteachers delved more deeply into our own subject matter knowledge and knowledge of resources to design and implement our units. We also wrestled with ways to help students use the new knowledge, values, attitudes, and interests they had developed in meaningful ways.

Curriculum Strands in the Foreground and Background

Three curriculum strands were woven throughout our unit planning and teaching across the year:

Strand 1: creating and supporting the learning community

Strand 2: developing writing knowledge and skills

Strand 3: developing literary understanding and appreciation

For each unit, we identified which curriculum strand (or strands) was more prominent ("foreground") and which strand (or strands) was less prominent ("background"). Table 1 includes a summary of the varying emphases of the three curriculum strands in each unit.

Strand 1. This strand was important to us because our studies during the previous year and our own teaching experience convinced us that a writers' workshop requires a different kind of learning community than a traditional approach to teaching writing. Hermine Marshall's (1990) distinction between viewing the classroom as a workplace compared to a learning place was helpful to us in defining the *emphasis* we value in our teaching. We used this distinction as a starting point to develop our own ideas regarding subject matter knowledge, skills, dispositions, teacher and student roles, and what would represent "learning"[4]. For example, in traditional classrooms, getting work done is emphasized over what is actually learned from getting the work done.

In a work-oriented setting, subject matter is neatly packaged and defined and ready to be delivered to students. In a learning setting, knowledge is socially constructed and developed by people. This means that evidence, not authority, is used to construct new knowledge and judge the merits of ideas. This places each person in the position of sharing expertise rather than limiting expertise to knowledge found in texts or in the teacher's head. Moreover, thinking, questioning, discussing, learning from mistakes, trying new ideas, and so forth, are valued and rewarded as

[4]This metaphor was elaborated in collaboration with all LISSS Project participants within and across the teaching of science, social studies, and writing. It has been an important communication tool for us to think about how our teaching in the three different subject matter areas is similar and different.

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much as completing a finished product. Students not only focus on learning particular subject matter concepts but also on knowing how and why certain concepts and ideas are connected and useful. Understanding what it means to be a writer is part of the subject matter "content" in a learning place. Additionally, taking risks, challenging ideas, listening, collaborating, appreciating diversity, responding to and respecting others' ideas are important social behaviors in the learning place since they are necessary aspects of constructing knowledge. Our image of the learner in the learning place is someone who feels a sense of ownership and commitment to his or her own learning and has the disposition to inquire and ask why.

Although we did not have this image developed fully and clearly at the start of the school year, we did realize that students would need to be supported in making a transition from being participants in a traditional work setting classroom to taking on qualities of learners who can participate fully in a learning setting. Especially at the beginning of the year, this strand was prominent in our teaching and was an important part of supporting and inviting students to participate in our classroom. For example, we introduced sharing of drafts for feedback during the first unit (All About Me), as well as using Rosaen's emerging draft of her own All About Me piece as an example of how to share one's writing and the benefits of receiving feedback and assistance. Our second unit (Animalia) purposely required students to create a group product--their own alphabet page patterned after those found in the book *Animalia* by Graeme Base (1986). A great deal of our conversation focused on how the groups were functioning and what it takes to collaborate as writers. We returned to an emphasis on the learning community strand when we introduced the writers' workshop format during November and December. New routines were being introduced (e.g., authors' day, literature share day) that required purposeful support in helping student benefit from them.

Strands 2 and 3. For us, developing writing knowledge and skills as well as literary understanding and appreciation are at the heart of participating in a literate environment. Although our 45-minutes block of time each morning was devoted to the teaching of writing[5], we knew that without bringing literature into the writing curriculum that we would be missing important sources of ideas and models for good writing. In the early units (1-4), we devoted more attention to Strands 1 and 2 as a means of helping students not only learn what it means to use the writing process strategically but to work together in doing so. As described earlier, our first three units were also designed to teach particular knowledge about good writing and ways to use that knowledge to improve one's own writing. Although we had used literature as models almost on a daily basis, Strand 3--developing understanding and appreciation of literature--became prominent and remained prominent for the rest of the year beginning in January. If we wanted students to go beyond expressive writing where they wrote about personal experiences in narrative form (something we encouraged from the beginning in their journal writing), we felt it essential to work closely with good literature as an integral part of writers' workshop.

Changes in Thinking About Learning

As we instituted these changes across the year, they had implications for how we thought about learning. Planning on multiple layers and trying to support students' development along three curriculum strands raised issues regarding what would count as learning, as reflected in Rosaen's journal:

> This is a chance to plan on multiple levels--a chance to develop plans along different strands to support students' learning to collaborate and participate in a community of writers, try new forms of writing, become aware of the audience's role in the writing process, understand what it means to revise and not just edit a piece, etc. I'm struggling along with

[5]Due to several logistical factors in our project arrangements, it was not possible at this time to create a block of time for both reading and writing. There was a block of time devoted to reading and literature study in the afternoon taught by a coteacher. Through creation of this restructured time, Lindquist was able to take on the teacher-researcher role.

> Barb to conceptualize the "subject matter" of writing and find ways to weave in teaching students to understand and appreciate literature. We are working together to find representations of ways to think about the writing process, such as a "workshop" image in practicing descriptive writing techniques much like a craftsperson might do with learning new woodworking techniques. When planning in multiple layers, you need to assess in multiple layers too. *A unit may be tremendously successful in one area and not in another--so does it mean "success" or not?* [emphasis added] Knowing that one needs to plan on different levels and actually figuring out how to develop and carry out such plans are two very different experiences! (1/21)

Studying our students' learning helped us look at the success of a unit (or success of our teaching across a school year) differently than we might have before.

Billy: Authors Are People, Too

We became interested in Billy's case early in the year. Billy is a Caucasian student whose parents seemed concerned about and supportive of his learning. Billy wrote about his family members, especially his father, with fondness and a sense of closeness. Billy was not a problem student. In fact, he did whatever we asked in a cooperative and efficient manner, and the quality of his work was at least as good as anyone else's in the class. So why concentrate on the learning of a student who does what he is assigned, whose work is fine, and who doesn't cause any problems?

One piece of the "problem" that intrigued us was just that: Billy would do whatever you asked--no more, no less. He epitomized the "school-smart" student who would dutifully complete whatever task he was given but at the same time invested what appeared to us to be little personal commitment to making it his own task. Billy impressed us as the kind of student who is easily overlooked by teachers because he "does well" in school *even if he is not learning anything new* and *even if he is not challenged or invested in his work.* In our commitment to foster meaningful learning for *all* students, we wanted to learn more about how to engage Billy in his learning and see to it that he would grow and change as a writer in significant ways.

To introduce Billy, we invite you to sit in on a group interview in which he participated at the end of the year. The students were asked if they consider

themselves to be authors, and the following conversation developed (Billy's remarks are italicized):

Rosaen: OK, now some of you said "yes" and some of you said "no." Let's hear from the "yes" people first. Why would you say you're an author?

Billy: *Because authors are people who write stories or books, and that's what we're doing. We're writing stories and poetry and short books . . .*

Karla: But we didn't publish them either.

Brenda: Yeah.

Billy: *We can publish them if we want to publish them.*

Brenda: I published like two or three of mine. I published my Yesterday book.

Billy: *I published a couple of them.*

Kelly: I published a couple.

Brenda: And I laminated it and I put a binder on the side so now it's, now it's a regular book.

Billy: *So I consider, at least me an author.*

Brenda: Anyone can be an author if they write something. I don't think that it has to be published or it has to be out on the market . . .

Billy: *I don't either.*

Looking at this conversation, it could be argued that Billy made significant growth as a writer by virtue of considering himself to be an author--that he is someone who writes--and that he feels enough commitment to state it publicly. He even talked about authorship more than once across the year, as shown in the following journal entry[6]:

Authors are people too

They have family life (if their married) and (just the same as all people) like to have fun. *Like me, I'm an author.* [emphasis added] That doesn't

[6]Billy's own spellings, punctuation, and usage are printed as found in his written work. Cross-outs and ideas edited out on drafts are not included.

mean I don't like to have fun. Sure, I take trips swim, fish and other fun stuff." In their activities they can get Ideas. Authers are people too. (4/22)

However, two important questions emerge when considering whether these statements are evidence of growth: (1) What events and circumstances got him to make these statements? (2) What does Billy mean when he says he is an author and what kind of growth or change has he experienced? To explore these questions, we now back up in time and recount some critical incidents that show how Billy, an avid reader, became a writer.

A Reader Becomes a Writer

We begin with a brief sketch of Billy as a writer during the Laying Groundwork and Initiation phases of our year. This will provide background information for understanding a series of critical incidents that began at the end of January (toward the end of the Initiation phase) that played an important role in Billy's growth. Throughout our discussion of Billy's learning, we will discuss four broad dimensions of change that we traced over time: (a) subject matter learning (learning to write), (b) interpreting writing as an authentic experience, (c) participation in the learning community, and (d) voice in writing and engagement in writing[7]. These changes are described in detail in Table 2, and the discussion below draws from the information included in the table.

Starting Points for Billy as a Writer

Laying groundwork. At the beginning of the school year, Billy participated in the All About Me unit in his "school-smart" fashion. He listened politely during our lessons about how to develop leads with a focus and how to use descriptive details and

[7]These dimensions of change were developed out of the original analytic categories discussed in the methodology (analysis) section of this paper. From these initial analytic categories we developed four broad dimensions of change to make our discussion more manageable. Due to the considerable overlap in the original analytic categories when one looks at a students' written products and participation in the writing community, the dimensions were a more reasonable way to display our findings.

Table 2

Dimensions of Billy's Change Over Time

Phase 1: Laying Groundwork, September-November

Month:	September	September-October	October-November
Laying Groundwork:	Unit 1: All About Me	Unit 2: *Animalia*	Unit 3: Descriptive Writing
Dimensions of Change:			
Subject matter learning (learning to write)	Worked on developing focus in his writing. Revised first draft with change of focus and addition of details. *First draft: "My name is ___. My hobbies are . . ." *Second draft: My family does alot of things together. At dinner . . ."	Worked on vocabulary building in drafts of *Animalia* sentences: • "An army of agrivated ants ate all the anteaters in Arizona. Then headed for Alabama." • "An army of arogant ants assasinated all agrivated ant eaters in Arizona." • "An army of angry armadilos acussing afraid actors of adultury."	Used descriptive writing techniques (exaggeration and use of 5 senses) and was aware of their effect: • "I wanted to scream. "I saw him! Screams echoing in my head. He had long raggley, notted, hair. It looked like a rats nest. . . ". Journal reflections on unit: • "I think it helps your writing alot. It makes it sound much more interesting and makes you want to continue reading . . . exaggeration makes it much more interesting to read and write."
Writing as an authentic experience (writing to learn and other purposes)	Fulfilled expectations for assignment: revised to develop focus and added descriptive details. • "We all talk alot about what happened through all of our days like how we did in school and what we accomplished at work. We disscuss the next day and alot of other things."	Journal reflections on *Animalia* Project: *[What did you learn about what it takes to create a book like *Animalia*?] "It takes alot of imagination."	Journal reflections on unit: • "My purpose was to get a good, maybe a little bit scary piece to make Elliott sound scary for Halloween."
Participation in the learning community	Worked alone unless assigned to work with others.	Attempted to collaborate with group; took role as writer in group. Journal reflections on Project: *[How did you feel about working in your group?] "I think our group was a good group and what worked was what we all decided on." *[How did the collaboration help make it better?] "If there is calaberation between us we can work together well and decide what to write or whatever without arguments."	Worked alone unless assigned to work with others. Insisted on writing description of character when it came time to negotiate which students would write about characters or places. Journal reflection after unit: • "No, I don't mind doing it [group taping of collaborative story of haunted Elliott] but I don't really care."
Voice in writing and engagement in writing	Included personal details on second draft: • "All of us like to travel together we go to alot of lakes, and some of our favorites are Houghton lake and Jensen lake. . . . Me and my dad like to hunt and fish together. . . . I can't wait 'till Im twelve then I can hunt with my Dad but only small game."	Journal reflection on project: *[What did you like about your *Animalia* page?] "I like the drawing. I don't know why but I like to draw, but I'm not very good at it."	Journal reflection after unit: *[Explain how you feel about writing a piece individually and then putting it with others to create the Haunted Elliott Tour.] "I think it makes it a little bit challenging because you had to try to make it fit in with everyone else's piece." • "I don't know [what I'll work on next]. Writing isn't my favorite subject anyway. I don't like it that much."

Table 2 (cont)

	Phase 2: Initiation	Phase 3: Delving More Deeply into Authorship	
Month:	**December-January**	**February-March**	**April-June**
Writer's Workshop Unit:	**Units 4 & 5: Establishing a Writer's Workshop and Poetry**	**Unit 6: Author's Design**	**Unit 7: Author's Exploration**
Subject matter learning (learning to write)	Tried using various forms available in workshop setting: poetry, letters, paragraphs. Written reactions on midterm progress report (Jan. 30): *"The most important thing I learned is that 'when you write a piece it is not automaticly done. It still can be worked on and made better no matter how good you think it is.'"	Tried new form of writing that is his favorite kind of book to read: adventure story.	4/13 Tried writing modern romantic fiction tale. April journal entry: "I'd like to reflect. I started out this year thinking, Mrs. L. really does drag writing assignments out a long time. Too long. Now I still think she does but I'm used to it. We all started out the year with a 'All about Me' piece. I was amazed how long it took. Between now and then I've written poems and other things about me, like, my family traditions. And my favorite thing to write, I've written an adventure story 7 1/2 pages long. It took me about 3 weeks."
Writing as an authentic experience (writing to learn and other purposes)	Treated writing during workshop as "school assignment" that needed to be done: *little revision *letters written but not sent *Spent much of workshop time reading (but not for writing purposes) Written reflections on midterm progress report (Jan. 30): *"To become a good writer you have to practice, and work at it, you have to be patient, willing to start over, and over again." *"I think my best piece is the one about how I was born because, how I was born is kind of special. . . . What made me think about it is when you read the story 'Knots on a Counting rope,' it gave me an idea to write about myself as the author made it seem like the boy in the story was writing his autobiography."	Treated writing as a personal challenge. *1/31 Writing record conference: "Can't write an adventure story or any kind of story." *2/7 Second term writing workshop goals: "To write a good fiction adventure story using people my age." Followed through from oral planning stages to drafting to sharing to publishing.	In trying a fiction tale next, seemed to be trying to build on previous experience with writing adventure story.
Participation in the learning community	Worked alone on pieces. Writing not shared with class.	2/6 Shared with class for first time: DARE[a] paragraph. 2/7 Collaborated with Stan to plan out adventure story.	Collaborated with Joe to plan story, but they did not continue to work together to complete the story.
Voice in writing and engagement in writing	Although he felt strongly about topic for letter to dad (asking to be able to get a raccoon), needed prodding to develop ideas and to finish letter. This letter and letter written to grandparents were never sent. Written reflections on midterm progress report (Jan 30): *"My goal is to write a fiction story that is good."	Although writing time was limited across the month, continued to work on adventure, even when Stan lost interest. 3/20 Shared completed adventure story with group. Continued to work on story by publishing (typed on computer).	Wrote a "summary" style paragraph as the "story." Did not publish the piece.

[a] DARE is an acronym for Drug Awareness Resistance Education.

information to add interest to his writing. Then he would dutifully complete the day's assignment and set it aside to return to reading the latest novel he had checked out of the library. For example, when asked to develop a series of leads from which to choose, he did so, and eventually changed his lead from "My name is Billy. My hobbies are . . ." to a more focused and interesting lead. He also made use of suggestions to include details that developed his new lead more fully, resulting in the following as a final copy:

> My family does a lot of things together. At dinner most of the time we eat together. My favorite food is pepperoni lovers pizza with as much pepperoni and cheese that they allow me to have but my mom makes alot of casserols. We all talk alot about what happened through all of our days like how we did in school and what we accomplished at work. We discuss the next day and alot of other things. All of us like to travel together we go to alot of lakes, and some of our favorites are Houghton lake and Jensen lake. We go to a lot of placeses and do alot of thing together. Me and my dad like to hunt and fish together and we do alot. I can't wait till Im twelve then I can hunt with my Dad but only small game. When Im fourteen I can hunt big game with him. That will be fun! My hobbies are in the summer baseball climb trees and swimming. In winter I like basketball and snowmobiling. (9/24)

Although Billy had discussed ideas about an ending with Rosaen, he did not include one--perhaps because students were not explicitly assigned to work on their ending like they were assigned to work on leads. Throughout the drafting and revising period, Billy worked alone unless he was assigned to share his draft or asked to work with a partner to make suggestions for improvement.

The work done on this assignment did seem to make an impression on Billy, however, since in an April journal entry he commented:

> I'd like to reflect. I started out his year thinking, Mrs. Lindquist really does drag writing assignments out a long time. Too long. Now I still think she does but I'm used to it. We all started out the year with a "All about Me" piece. I was amazed how long it took. . . .

Billy remembered working on a piece over time to improve it as "dragging out" an assignment, showing that at the beginning of the year he focused more on getting his work done than on making the quality of his piece better.

By the end of October, after learning to use details involving the five senses and exaggeration, he began to see some value in using descriptive writing techniques, and showed some awareness of audience in his journal reflections on the descriptive writing unit:

> I think it [description] helps your writing alot. I makes it sound much more interesting and makes you want to continue reading . . . exaggeration makes it much more interesting to read and write.

His descriptive writing piece (his individual contribution to a class project in which we created a tour of "Haunted Elliott") showed that he was able to use descriptive details and that he also included a great deal of emotion in the piece:

> I wanted to scream! I saw him! Screams echoing in my head. He had long raggley, notted, hair. It looked like a rats nest (though I have never seen one). Horror scene! My mind was racing back and forth. It took all I had to think straightly. Thoughts of sadness came to me like a thunder clap. I thought of my parents and sisters! Ahhhhhh!! I don't want to die this early!!! I'm too young!! He had what looked like bloody hands. I wonder I said quietly, and to myself, I wonder who that blood on his hands is from. Who was his first victim!? Slowly I inched forward to get a closer look. Woa!!! Scarry face, messed up hair, bloody hands. All together with every bad point he looked like a horror story in itself..... Oh! Thank God!! he's only the Janitor with the mop draped over his head. What a relief!!! (10/29)

Yet Billy did not seem committed to becoming part of the writing community and still did not particularly enjoy writing, as evidenced by his journal reflections on the descriptive writing unit in October:

> No, I don't mind doing it [group taping of collaborative story] but I don't really care. I don't know [what I'll work on next]. Writing isn't my favorite subject anyway. I don't like it that much.

In early November, when Billy was asked to reflect on his learning since the beginning of the year and to "write and explain how you think your writing has improved since the beginning of fifth grade. What were you thinking then and what are you thinking now?" he responded as follows:

> I think I am a much better and much more descriptive writer than I used to be. I remember thinking "what a long time were spending on this assignment" ! "I've never spent this long on one project." I never liked writing very much but I like it alot more now." (11/8)

Like many of the other students in the class, Billy had become aware of some descriptive writing techniques, had learned to use them in his description, and had gotten to the point where writing seemed to be somewhat more enjoyable. This encouraged us to open up the curriculum and try using a writers' workshop format where students could put the "groundwork" to use.

Initiation. During the months of December and January, Billy wrote several pieces of his choice in writers' workshop. A look back at his writing folder revealed that he not only had written several pieces, he had experimented with a variety of forms, as displayed in Table 3.

During his initiation into a writers' workshop, Billy continued his cooperative, "school-smart" behavior. He did what was expected--no more, no less. For example, he dutifully wrote a rough draft and a final copy of a letter to his grandparents, and yet there are few changes from one version to another. Moreover, he never sent the letter, indicating that this was not an authentic writing task for him. Likewise, even when he wrote a letter to his dad explaining why it was reasonable and desirable for him to get a raccoon (something he said he would love to have), he never sent the letter. During this time period he also maintained his habit of reading during writing time as though he set a minimal level of written work for himself and when that was completed, he was free to do what he preferred.

Yet Billy seemed to be changing in some significant ways. In January, Lindquist asked the students to write their own midterm progress report in which she wanted them to consider the following criteria for writing:

Criteria for Writing

1. Actively participate in a variety of activities to stimulate thinking before writing
2. Develop questioning strategies to clarify writing
3. Interact with others in order to become a part of a community of writers
4. Participate with other children in editing
5. Use resources in writing projects

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Students were asked to respond to four questions regarding their progress. Printed below are the questions and Billy's responses, with some key phrases italicized:

Billy's Midterm Progress Report (1/30)

1. What do you have to do in order to become a good writer?

To become a good writer *you have to have patience, and work at it, you have to be patient, willing to start over and over again.*

2. What is your best piece of writing from this term to date? What makes it the best? How did you come up with the idea for this piece? (Attach the piece)

I think my best piece is the one about how I was born because how I was born is kind of special. (see piece) What made me think about it is *when you read the story "Knots on a Counting Rope," it gave me an idea to write about myself as the author made it seem like the boy in the story was writing his autobiography.*

3. What is the most important or useful thing you learned as a writer during this term of writing workshop?

The most important thing I learned is that *when you write a piece it not automaticly done. It still can be worked on and made better no matter how good you think it is.*

4. What are your goals for the rest of the term? What do you want to try to do as a writer?

"My goal is to write a fiction story that is good."

Billy's initiation into the writers' workshop was only partially successful. As his self-evaluation revealed, there were interesting contrasts between what Billy *knew and understood*, compared to what he *did*. For example, he knew that good writing takes a long time (Question #1) and that persistence in revision will improve its quality (Question #3); and yet during December and January, Billy spent only a few days on each piece and did little revision. Moreover, most pieces he wrote were only shared with the teachers during conferences they initiated, and letters written to relatives were never sent. He did share his word puzzles with Stan, a boy who sat next to him. The piece about how he was born, which he considered to be his best one, was a first draft that was not revised or shared. His response to Question #2 does

Table 3

Summary of Billy's Writing Folder, November-May

DATE	PIECE	FORM	SHARING
11/13	letter to grandparents	letter	writing conference with teacher; did not send to grandparents
11/19	deer hunting	narrative	writing conference with teacher
11/28	D.A.R.E.[a]	essay	shared on authors' day 2/6
12/4	family Christmas	narrative	hallway for school-wide "Christmas walk-through"
12/7	Christmas trees	word puzzle	shared with Stan
12/?	presents	poem	writing conference with teacher
12/10	New Year's Day	word puzzle	shared with Stan
12/10	Nintendo	word puzzle	shared with Stan
1/?	poetic license	poem	no
1/?	letter to dad about getting a raccoon	letter	writing conference with teacher; did not give to dad
1/?	description of how Billy was born	narrative	no
2/?	adventure	short story	writing conference (3/19) and shared with small group (3/20)
3/13	fairy tale	fairy tale	wrote with Jack and shared with small group 3/13

[a]D.A.R.E. is an acronym for Drug Awareness Resistance Education.

reveal connections he began to make between reading and writing--that reading published pieces could give him ideas about pieces he would write.

Delving More Deeply Into Authorship: Four Critical Incidents

We turn now to exploring four critical incidents that show how Billy's actions began to fit with his developing understandings. We call these "critical incidents" (Newman, 1989) because they seem to be critical experiences or turning points in Billy's transformation from a "school-smart" student completing work to a writer who considered himself to be an author.

Incident 1: Linking reading to writing. In late January, just before Billy wrote his self-evaluation, Rosaen had a conference with Billy to discuss his overall writing progress. One focus in the conference was on how Billy was using his writing record, a booklet in which students could keep track of four areas (adapted from Graves, 1983): (a) topics I know and care about, (b) new ideas to write about, (c) skills I can use, (d) books/pieces I have written. Since he had not used his writing record at all, Billy and Rosaen were filling out the record together. This led to a conversation about the kinds of books Billy liked to read and progressed to a portion of the conversation where Billy elaborated on his preference for fiction books about kids his age that include good description:

> Rosaen: Would you be interested sometime in taking on the challenge of seeing if you could become that kind of person? You weren't born that way. I wasn't either, but do you think you could work on becoming that kind of writer if you worked at it hard? I'd be willing to help you with that.
>
> Billy: How would I do that?
>
> Rosaen: Well, I think, if you've been doing a lot of reading, you can use ideas that you get from reading to say, "What are these authors doing that really makes their books good and could I try something like that?" So why don't you write down an adventure story on here [she pointed to his writing record under "Topics I know and care about"], and we could consider, another day, getting started on working on becoming an adventure writer. And it would take time and hard work; it wouldn't be something that would happen over night, but it's possible, I think.

Billy: I don't think so.

Rosaen: I bet it's possible.

Billy: I don't think so.

Rosaen: I bet it is. What about stories about kids? You enjoy reading them. Would you ever consider writing about them? It wouldn't have to be necessarily a story. Have you ever pretended that you're someone else and written about something pretending you're somebody else? Like pretending you're another kid?

Billy: I don't remember ever trying something like that.

Rosaen: Would you be interested in trying that as a new idea to write about?

Billy: Pretend I'm someone else? I guess. . . (1/31)

They left this topic for a while and went on to discuss other parts of the writing record, including "Skills I can use." Billy was willing to list "read, spell, organize thoughts and punctuation." He also insisted on including "can't write an adventure story or any kind of story" in the list. Rosaen encouraged him to consider taking this on as a challenge so he would be able to change it from "can't" to "can." Sprinkled throughout the remainder of the conference were points of encouragement such as the following:

Rosaen: (looking at a piece of descriptive writing in Billy's folder): You see that's the beginning of a story. You could even go back and use that for the beginning of a story that you say you "can't" write. . . . I see another one here.

******

Rosaen: A true story about deer hunting--here's another spot that we could start with for an adventure, to make you become an adventure writer, that you say you're not . . . sometimes writers start with true stories and turn them into fiction and that's a way they get ideas.

******

Rosaen: Is there something you think you'd like to work on next in your writing? Are you interested in taking on this challenge of seeing if you can learn to write stories and feel good about it?

Billy: (inaudible response)

Rosaen: Or would you rather try something else? (long pause) Why don't you do some thinking about that, because you won't have time to work on it today anyway. (1/31)

Interestingly, the day before this conference, Billy had included on his Midterm Progress Report that his goal "is to write a fiction story that is good." Yet during this writing conference he insisted that his goal was something he couldn't reach:

Billy: Something I can't do . . . that's something I can't do.

Rosaen: Are you saying it's something you're never going to be able to do?

Billy: Probably.

Rosaen: Well, let's see, let's see what we can do about that.

Rosaen could sense Billy's reluctance to try something new and wondered if he was worried about whether he could be successful at it. As the conference ended, she reminded him that she would be there to help if he decided he wanted to try. A few days later, he came up to her and said, "I'm ready to become an adventure writer."

The timing and content of this conference were important for Billy. He had identified his own a goal to write a good fiction story but seemed convinced that he did not know how. It is possible that Billy was being modest about his view of himself since we have seen him claim he cannot do things or minimize his talents in other situations. Even before knowing that Billy had written his goal, Ms. Rosaen encouraged him to link his reading interests to his writing. However, without explicit encouragement, promised support, and even a little nudging, perhaps Billy would never have taken the plunge.

Incident 2: Taking the plunge. We join Billy and Rosaen during a writing conference conversation they are having about Billy's adventure story:

Rosaen: Help me understand a little bit more about how you created this and thought of these ideas.

Billy: I probably wouldn't have all these ideas if we hadn't, if me and Stan hadn't had a conference with you.

Rosaen: So it really helped you to talk about it? Did this come from that conversation where we started asking a bunch of questions like, "How's this all going to happen?"

Billy: Uh huh. (3/19)

The conversation Billy was referring to in his comments took place on February 28, three weeks after Billy began collaborating with Stan to write his adventure. Throughout the three weeks, Billy and Stan talked periodically with Rosaen about how the story would develop. During this same time period, Billy also attempted to revise a letter to his grandparents that Rosaen suggested he might want to update and actually send (however, he never did finish the revision or send the letter). He also created a Valentine card and spent some time writing in his journal "I don't know what to write" enough times to fill up an entire piece of notebook paper.

By the week of February 19, he and Stan seemed to focus in more seriously and consistently on working on the story. Their conference with Rosaen took place after they had developed an introduction to the story and began with her attempt to understand their writing purposes and ideas for developing their story:

Rosaen: So, fill me in on what your thinking was about the story. I'm kind of lost on what you wanted to do.

Billy: Our story is about this dude . . .

Stan: Who makes up an invention.

Billy: Nick . . .

Rosaen: OK, why don't you read what you have so far.

Billy: I'll read it: "Nick was a very smart boy, 10 years old. He lived with his dad and mom. He had two brothers and a sister. The oldest brother was 17. The next oldest was Nick. The next oldest was the other brother, who was 6. The sister was 2. He had a lab of his own in the basement. His parents knew he was very smart. At the present time he is working on a radio-controlled lawn mower. He was about an hour away from being done with it."

Rosaen: OK, so you've sort of set the scene here. You've talked about who Nick is. Now, just talk to me about what your ideas are about where you want this story to go. What are you thinking?

Billy: He could invent something like, I think we want him to invent something that's been wanted to be invented for a long time, right?

Stan: Or just come up with an invention that we need.

In this segment of the conversation, in addition to becoming updated on their progress, Rosaen wanted to find out more about what Billy and Stan had in mind as authors and then tried to make connections with the authors' design unit the class was currently engaged in. She directed their attention to the authors' design framework the class had been studying, which focused on studying the relationship among topic, form of writing, authors' main idea or purpose, audience, and audience response. The conversation continued as follows:

Rosaen: You can use this [author's design framework] to plan out anything that you're writing. It doesn't have to be a poem or whatever. Now you've chosen your topic, which is that you want, what's the kid's name . . .

Stan: Nick.

Rosaen: . . . Nick to invent something. And one thing that we might want to think about is, first of all, who is your audience gonna be? Who do you think would want to read this story? Who are you writing for?

Billy: We're gonna put it in the library.

Rosaen: OK, so it would be other kids about your age? Do you think any grownups would read it?

Billy: Maybe the librarian.

Rosaen: OK, so mostly kids your age, but grownups might enjoy it too?

Billy: I don't think they'd enjoy it, it's kind of a kids' story.

Rosaen: OK, so this is a kids' story. All right, now [looks at authors' design sheet], it says, "Who is the audience?" We've talked about that. Now, "What do they know or need to know?" You've shown them some things about what Nick is like. Now, what about this invention? We have to think about, you were thinking that you wanted it to be some kind of an invention that people haven't thought of before?

Billy: Something really neat.

Rosaen: Something really neat. So, what kind of reaction are you thinking you want to get from your audience? What do you want the kids reading this to think or feel when they're done or while they're reading it?

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Billy: That they can be smart too. I don't know.

Rosaen: That could be . . .

Billy: Kids their age, so they could try too.

Rosaen: All right that could be one thing. What are some other possibilities? Not just necessarily what they would learn, but how do you want them to feel while they're reading it?

Billy: I want them to like it.

Rosaen: You want them to like it. OK, let's work on what it means to like something. When you like it, what kinds of feelings are you having, especially with this topic?

Billy: That he's smart.

Rosaen: That would be an opinion that they would have. Do you want them to be excited? interested? bored? sad? happy?

Billy: I want them to feel interested and want to keep going and keep . . . reading.

The conversation continued for quite a while with Billy and Rosaen (with occasional input from Stan) playing around with possibilities of different inventions and plausible circumstances under which an invention would be included in an adventure story, as well as where the exciting parts would be. She referred often to their own reading experience (e.g., "Think about what makes you want to keep reading") as a way to help them link their reading experiences to their writing. In addition, she kept emphasizing using themselves as a source of information to think about what would appeal their audience.

Even though Rosaen tried to steer the conversation toward helping Billy and Stan realize their own intentions, Billy tried to rely on her for developing the content of the story and for what to do next. This tension is illustrated in italicized remarks:

Rosaen: *Who would you really be worried about* and turn that page to keep reading if that person got saved?

Billy: *Who would you?*

Rosaen: Who would I? One of my kids, certainly, or people I know.

Billy: His mom.

Rosaen: Or certain famous people.

Billy: Cosby.

Stan: No, I don't like him.

Rosaen: Or, if it were a character that I just really liked in the story--somebody who, once the story got going and I read about the character and I really thought the character was a neat person. It wouldn't have to be someone from my real life. *What about you?* (long pause) You don't have to decide all this now. OK, so you've got your scene set, and you've got, sort of, his invention worked out, *now where do you want the story to start?*

Billy: Like start right now saying, like, in five days there's going to be, five days from then there's going to be this contest for inventors.

Rosaen: OK, do you think, would it be helpful to you to sort of make a list of events of how you want them to turn out before we forget all these, or do you just want to start writing? *Which would you rather do?*

Stan: (inaudible)

Rosaen: Do you want to plan out your events a little bit? Sort of like a real short outline?

Billy: *What do you think we should do?*

Rosaen: *I'm not the one who's going to write this, so, I think either way is fine. It sort of depends on what you prefer.*

Billy: Start writing.

By getting support in generating and developing ideas during the drafting phase of their story, Billy and Stan were able to plunge into developing the main part. As Billy noted in a writing conference, he sustained his interest and commitment to writing even though Stan "quit working on it and started talking to people around him, and I was the only one working on it" (3/19). This conversation supported Billy in becoming an adventure writer--in being able to link what he knows as a reader to using his knowledge in his writing.

Incident 3: Sharing, celebrating, and reflecting. Although he had risked sharing his Drug Awareness Resistance Education essay about staying off drugs with the class on authors' day on February 4, Billy seemed reluctant to share his adventure story with his peers. Instead of pushing him to risk something he was not quite ready for, Rosaen asked him to share it with her, and he was willing. In addition to celebrating his accomplishment, she wanted to get him to reflect on his writing experience and think about whether he would call himself an adventure writer now. Just as it did during the writing conference on February 28, the same tension arose as to who should make decisions about Billy's writing (shown in italics):

Billy (reads ending of story): "And now, I proudly present Nick with his trophy and certificate." A ripple of applause came loudly from the audience. Nick was beaming. So were his parents and brother and sister. Ten minutes later Nick was sitting in one of the chairs at the White House table enjoying a feast in his honor. "My compliments to the chef," said Nick.

"This is great food," said his mom.

"Yeah," said their dad.

"Thank you so much," said Nick.

"You certainly are welcome," said the President.

* * * *

"I'm second! The world finals for an inventing contest and I'm only second! Why not first? This is the first time I haven't been first place in an inventing contest."

"It's all right dear," said his mom. "Like they say, 'Sometimes you eat the bear but sometimes the bear eats you.'"

"Oh well," said Nick, "maybe I'll be first next time," Nick said.

"I'm sure you will, " said dad.

Rosaen: So how do you think you did?

Billy: (shrugs) *I don't know.*

Rosaen: You don't know?

Billy: *How do you think I did?*

Rosaen: I like it a lot. I think you have some really nice parts to it, like the way you set it up ahead of time that he had this invention, you explained where they were going. I like the way you changed scenes--I saw your little stars on the page to show that you were changing scenes. And I really like your ending where you didn't

make it that he got first but he got second. It made it seem more realistic. *What do you think?*

Billy: *I don't know.*

Rosaen: Is it hard to stand back and look at a piece after you've worked on it so hard?

Later in the conversation, Rosaen returned to he issue and asked Billy directly:

Rosaen: Now, would you call yourself an adventure writer now?

Billy: *I don't know.*

Rosaen: What do you think?

Billy: *Would you call me an adventure writer?*

Rosaen: I certainly would. Who could we share this with?

Billy: I'm gonna put it in the library.

After talking about how he planned to proceed with publishing, she persisted with her question:

Rosaen: *Now I'd like to hear <u>your</u> opinion* of whether you think you're an adventure writer now. I gave you mine.

Billy: *Yeah.*

Rosaen: Any ideas about what's coming next for you, once you get this into the computer?

Billy: Maybe another one, I don't know.

As part of the celebration of his writing, Rosaen also directed the conversation to considering more particular qualities of the writing to get Billy to reflect on what made his story a successful adventure, as shown in the example below:

Rosaen: Which part do you like the best here? Which do you feel most satisfied with? (pauses) Usually when I write something there are parts that I like better than others, like I feel really good about one certain part and then others are OK, but they're not quite as good as one part that I really like.

Billy: I like this part.

Rosaen: What part is that?

Billy: Where they're traveling in the car and I'm squished.

Rosaen: Tell me about it.

Billy: I don't know, it just sounds real, because that's what we do.

Rosaen: OK, so you relied on your own experience to figure out how to add those details?

Billy: Uh huh.

--later in the discussion--

Rosaen: How did you come up with you idea for your ending, that he didn't get first place? How did you get that idea?

Billy: I just thought, because I don't like stories when you know exactly what is going to happen because the main character always comes out the hero. So I decided I'd make him not first place and make him not the real hero; but he was kind of because he did go to the world's finals.

Rosaen: OK, so he was a hero because he did something special, but he didn't have to come out on top to be that hero? That's a really neat idea.

Billy's comments show that he made two kinds of connections: using his personal experience and reading experiences as sources of ideas for his writing. This conversation extended Billy's experience as a writer to include sharing, celebrating, and reflecting on his writing. It also seemed to help him make a big decision--to share his story with his peers.

Incident 4: Sharing, celebrating, and reflecting with peers. The day after his writing conference was authors' day, and instead of having the whole class participate, we offered it as an option for anyone interested to meet in the reading corner. Billy not only joined this group, he volunteered to share his story. We use the word "share," because at first he said he wanted a turn but wanted Rosaen to read the story. When she responded to this continued tension of sorting out who is responsible for the writing process by insisting that he read it, he finally agreed. We join the sharing session as Billy reads the part where Nick does his heroic deed:

Billy (reading his story): "Help, help help!" screamed a kid. He had been going on the magnum and the rail had broken on the highest hill. The car had fallen and just barely landed on the other rail and went down to the ground. But he had grabbed a rail and was hanging there. "Help, help!" he said desperately--he desperately yelled.

"I've got it," said Nick. "I'll get my hand and bring him down safely." He ran to his dad and asked for the car keys and sprinted to the car. He was just in time. Just as he got there and put it on the ground the rail the kid was on snapped. What happened next was too fast to follow with your eyes. The boy was falling fast. Nick frantically hit the ON button and raised it up and opened the hand. The hand shot up while Nick was maneuvering the controls. The hand went up up up and sailed right over the kid's head. Nick had to act fast. He hit the the DOWN button and the OVER button and grabbed the kid right about 20 feet from the ground. Slowly Nick lowered the hand and the boy to the safety of the ground.

That night in their hotel room they watched the thing on the news. The news broadcasters made Nick out to be a hero. While they were watching the news the telephone rang. It was the hotel person saying, "It's President Bush on the phone for you, on the phone for Nick. Nick answered the phone and President Bush said, "Nick I'm proud of you, so proud of you that I'm going to see to it that we have a ceremony congratulating you and presenting you with a trophy and $5,000 certificate to Toys R Us."

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Bush," said Nick. Then he put the phone on the hook and ran to tell the others they were to go to the While House in Washington, D.C., on the way back from the inventing contest . . . [Billy continues reading until end].

Now there's one more [piece to hear in the group].

Rosaen: What do you think? . . . Are there any parts that you liked that you could help Billy know about? (3/20)

After reading his story, Billy seemed reluctant to get feedback from the group, since his last comment implied he thought the group should move on to the next story. Rosaen, however, raised the question, "What do you think?" to elicit a response from Billy's audience. After general comments such as it was "cool," "long," and "weird," a few students began to elaborate on specific aspects of the story. For example, Iris commented that she liked the part where Nick saved the kid, the very part that Billy had tried to make exciting. He also got feedback that there were many parts of the story that were "creative," followed by particular examples. In addition, Billy was asked how long it took him to write it, and he replied, "I don't know; two, maybe three weeks."

This sharing session provided Billy with the opportunity to come full circle in the writing process--from the idea stage, to drafting, to revising, to publishing, and publicly sharing. The grin on his face when he began reading, and the quiet look of pride as he ended, indicated to us that although this had been a risk for him, it was one worth taking.

The Meaning of Authorship

Once Billy took on the challenge of writing his adventure story, he seemed to understand authorship more deeply and took on the role with more commitment. He not only *knew about* the writing process, different writing techniques, aspects of quality writing, and connections between literature and writing, he *used his knowledge* in creating a piece that he was very proud of. Moreover, he had come to value the lengthy process of working to improve the quality of his writing, as shown in the end-of-year group interview on May 29:

Rosaen: Now, having a lot of writing, is that the most important part of being an author?

Unison: No.

Timmy: Not really.

Karla: The most important part is probably . . .

Billy: *Making good stories* . . .

Unison (overlapping): Yeah.

Karla: . . . and exploring things that you write about, characters and setting . . .

Brenda: 'Cause you might have only one or two really good stories, and that's better than having 10 or 12 really bad stories.

Billy: *I would rather put the time into one good one* than write a couple . . .

Karla: Eleven or 12 bad stories.

Putting his time into one good one is just what Billy did. After writing his adventure story, he chose to collaborate with Jack on a fairy tale, but his tale read

more like a plot summary and was one paragraph in length. He did participate in small-group discussions about possible legends he could write and did follow through on typing his adventure story into the computer for publication during the closing weeks of school. It could be argued that Billy's interest in and commitment to writing was therefore not sustained, since he did not immediately produce another quality piece. Yet his end-of-year comments suggest otherwise:

> You got to do what you wanted. Write what you wanted. Have as long as you wanted . . . All the years prior to this year we just talked, this is how you write. You should make it description. But *this year we got to use that instead of just talk about it.* (5/29)

He understood the value of making his own decisions, including deciding to take his time to explore his options instead of merely producing another product. During this time, we were also encouraging students to explore literature for ideas and inspiration as well as for finding models of good writing. Billy also understood that the writing knowledge he was developing was for a particular purpose--to be used by him as an author to write and to improve his writing.

Learning From Billy

Billy's case is about one learner's unique transformations in a writing community. As teacher-researchers, we have learned a great deal through our close study of his learning about several issues that are pertinent to (a) understanding the potential of our writing community for supporting all students' learning and (b) about what it means as teachers to understand students' writing growth.

Supporting Learning for *All* Students

When we began the school year, we were not certain how our learning community would evolve and what changes we would need to make in our own practices that would foster the emerging vision we had for our learners. We were teachers in transition aiming to support students in making their own transition from a more traditional approach to learning to write to benefiting from writing in a

workshop setting. As we studied Billy's learning, we did not see a clear-cut case of "success." Recall that by the end of January, for example, Billy had become aware of some new ideas for writing and had developed some new knowledge but had not really changed significantly his actions and attitudes as a writer. Also recall that he still asked for his teacher's stamp of approval for calling himself an adventure writer even after creating a well-developed story. We kept asking ourselves whether he really was a transformed writer or just continuing in his usual "school-smart" performance. In pursuing this issue, we not only looked at his *individual growth* but considered his changes in relation to what was happening in the context of the *developing learning community*; that is, what might we as his teachers or his peers have been doing to either support or impede his development?

We noticed that this learning community was not an easy one in which to take risks. Early in the year, the norms among Billy's classmates were to do the minimum to get by. Lively discussions were difficult to get going and students were reluctant to collaborate. By early February, we were finally beginning to see signs of genuine collaboration, concern for each other as learners, and commitment to writing in the learning community as a whole. By February, it was a lot "safer" to risk sharing, collaborating, celebrating, and inquiring than it had been in the fall months.

As we asked ourselves why and looked back over the phases of our curriculum--laying groundwork, initiation, and delving more deeply into authorship--we saw ways in which our own decisions may have contributed both positively and negatively to this slow evolution. For example, during the first phase (laying groundwork), our units were more teacher-directed and orchestrated in the sense that we were making most of the larger decisions and doling out specific decisions to students when we decided they were ready. The advantage to this approach was that we were able to lay groundwork in our learning community and subject matter curriculum strands in an organized and efficient way. Students

needed to learn particular things. However, a potential disadvantage was that we may have been controlling too many decisions, and not letting students' interests and commitments enter into the picture early enough. Since interests, commitments, and making decisions are an integral part of authorship, we may have been short-circuiting students' opportunities to experience important aspects of what it means to be an author. We wanted students to participate as if they were in a writing community, but perhaps that community did not yet exist.

Perhaps Billy's progress by late January--knowledge and skill development without commitment to act--was due to our emphasis on our own curricular agendas. There seem to be parallels in the way we opened up our curriculum in the next two phases (initiation and delving more deeply into authorship) and the way Billy developed as a writer. When he had more opportunities to make decisions--that is, find connections between his own interests and the possibilities for using these connections as a writer--he seemed to experience writing in new ways.

We are still wrestling with the issue of how teachers can provide important and valuable input so that students' knowledge and skills will grow in ways that honor and build on students' interests and commitments. Our final unit, authors' exploration, seemed to come the closest to providing such an experience. In that unit, we constructed experiences directly out of students' interests and simply introduced various aspects of "what authors do" as food for thought not as assignments to complete. Although Billy did not complete another major writing project that year, he did investigate new topics actively. Several students were inspired by that unit to pursue new forms and topics in their writing[8]. Thus, by

[8]For example, Iris wrote poems about flowers after doing some research on them; Tim wrote an essay on sharks; Brenda wrote her first mystery story; Yolanda and Sarah tried writing a fantasy; and Russell attempted, but abandoned, his attempt to write a series of poems about his hamster.

taking a close look at Billy's progress, we learned a great deal about our writing community and how we would institute a writers' workshop in the future.

Learning as Transformation: Understanding What "Growth" Means

We began the year with the assumption that researching students' learning across the year would be a messy, complex process, and that the students' growth would be difficult to define and trace. By studying Billy's learning in depth, we figured out ways to understand other students' learning for our future teaching[9]. For example, by reconstructing our year-long curriculum and identifying our curricular phases and strands, we identified four "dimensions of change" (see Table 2) that are helpful tools in studying our students' progress. In addition, we saw value in having students reflect regularly in their journals about their own growth. Billy's own reflections made a major contribution to our understanding of him as a learner; we were not left with relying on our memories and impressions or solely on the pieces he wrote.

When we attempted to use these dimensions to organize our thinking and describe Billy's learning over time, we saw that they enabled us to capture the unique transformations he experienced. We can use this conceptual framework to study other students' learning, and to develop a better understanding of their different knowledge, skills, values, interests, and attitudes that evolve over time. It is a useful tool in documenting where students start in the learning process--along several different dimensions--and how their growth evolves over time.

[9]Also see Rosaen, Lindquist, and Hazelwood (1992, April), *Integration From the Student Perspective: Constructing Meaning in a Writers' Workshop*, a paper presented at a symposium on Curriculum Integration: Theory and Practice at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco. In this paper we used the concept of transformation to understand and describe how Billy and Brenda constructed their own integration across science, social studies, and writer's workshop.

We cannot claim that all 47 fifth graders learned what Billy learned or that they were transformed in the way Billy was[10]. We do not wish to make that claim. Instead, we can claim that we understand the learning community in which all of our fifth graders participated at a deeper level because of our close study of Billy's learning. This has helped us reflect on the changes we made in our curriculum and teaching practices and the roles and responsibilities we and our students took on. Our learning will help us decide what to continue and what to change; we expect continued transformations! We also have gained considerable insight into what learning may mean in a writers' workshop, and thus the multiple and complex aspects we need to attend to as we plan, teach, and assess students' learning.

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[10]Our data do support, however, arguments that other students showed transformations as writers in equally interesting and dramatic ways. Brenda's growth as a writer is discussed in the paper cited in the previous footnote. Additional students' transformations will be written about in future reports.

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